

# **AVP-AUSTRALIA**

# **NATIONAL**

# **GATHERING 2007**

# **REPORT**

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## I INTRODUCTION

The 2007 AVP-Australia National Gathering was held at Forest House Public School in Surry Hills, Sydney for three days from Friday 26 January to Sunday 28 January. The proximity of the venue to Central Station (3 blocks away) was very convenient for everyone. The Gathering was attended by 18 people over the three days with two facilitators from AVP-VIC and the others from two AVP (NSW) groups AVP-Sydney and AVP(NSW) Prisons & Blue Mountains.

The Gathering was non-residential with facilitators coming to what-ever days and sessions were convenient. The timing for each day was different with Friday sessions from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, Saturday 9:00 am to 7:30 pm and Sunday 9:00 am to 1:00 plus clean-up time.

A business session was held for several hours on Friday afternoon and the decisions revisited next morning in a plenary session. Business Meeting topics were divided into AVP-Australia, AVP-Australia structure and Communication. Those present were mindful of the presence of representatives from only two AVP-Australia groups and there was discussion about ways to increase involvement and consultation with more with all AVP groups about the 2008 National Gathering.

There was an offer to extend any facilitator, who was not able to attend, the chance to be able to participate in the Business Meeting remotely using telephone or skype conferencing. No one expressed interest in taking up this offer. Maybe this could be explored for future Gatherings and Business Meetings.

The various sessions and ongoing exchange of new ideas, new activities and experience was enriching for all those who attended. This report includes the Gathering schedule, the Gathering session agendas, Gathering feedback and a write up of the wisdom collected from the "Collective wisdom" session.

The plenary sessions included such diverse topics as the Proposed Structure of AVP-International; reports from the 2006 AVP International Conference in South Africa and of restorative practice presentations given by an AVP facilitator at several international conferences, an outline of the currently available AVP resources including dvds, manuals and electronic information; and a demonstration of the new AVP-Australia wiki clearinghouses. Gathering participants were invited at breaks to be connected to the wiki clearinghouses and see how they work.

This year several new regular scheduled activities were trialled. The first was a "Happy Hour" from 8:00 am to 9:00 am each morning to provide everyone with the opportunity to socialise; and the second was a plenary session each morning with a series of 15 presentations from various facilitators.

Copies of this and other AVP-Australia National Gathering Reports are available on [www.avpclearinghouse.wikispaces.com](http://www.avpclearinghouse.wikispaces.com). For more information about how to join this private AVP facilitators wikispace contact Katherine at [Katherine@transformingconflict.info](mailto:Katherine@transformingconflict.info).

Katherine & Malcolm Smith, Anthea & John Michaelis & Dennis Lam  
AVP (NSW)  
10 February 2007.

## **II BUSINESS MEETING 26/1/07 and 27/1/07**

Emails from Queensland, Victoria, West Australia and NZ were read. [see Appendix 2]

AVP-Australia is recognised as a network of autonomous AVP groups within Australia that have a common heritage, values and philosophy. National Gatherings make recommendations about issues and activities that are common to or affect groups.

### **AVP-AUSTRALIA**

- The Business Meeting agreed that Malcolm Smith (AVP-NSW) will continue to be the international contact person. He is happy to relinquish this if someone else would like to volunteer
- It was agreed that there is a need to facilitate a process of consultation and decision making for AVP in Australia. It was also agreed that there is a need to identify how AVP in Australia relates to the AVP International Conference and other AVP international committees and groups. We invite volunteers to form a AVP-Australia Consultation Working Party. Contact Malcolm at [avpsydney@avp.org.au](mailto:avpsydney@avp.org.au)
- The need was identified for an AVP-Australia national annual report to go to other AVP conferences. We invite each state group to contribute to the report. Katherine offered to co-ordinate and collate the 2007 report
- An invitation to AVP-Australia National Gatherings has been extended to AVP-Aotearoa. AVP-Aotearoa issued an informal invitation for Australian facilitators to attend their national gatherings and they hope to attend future Australian gatherings.

### **AVP-AUSTRALIA NATIONAL GATHERINGS**

- We identified a need to revisit the frequency and hosting of Gatherings and to organize the 2008 National Gathering. It was noted that there were members of each AVP group at the 2007 Quaker Yearly Meeting in Hobart. A suggestion was made to consider getting together after future Quaker Yearly Meetings. We invite volunteers for the setting up of the AVP-Australia National Gathering Working Party. Contact Malcolm at [avpsydney@avp.org.au](mailto:avpsydney@avp.org.au)
- The delegates from AVP-VIC recognise the value for smaller groups of resources such as AVP wikis, AVP websites, email groups, manuals and information sharing such as First Friday Gathering agendas. The delegates encourage other groups to take advantage of the resources available. Contact Malcolm at [avpsydney@avp.org.au](mailto:avpsydney@avp.org.au)
- AVP(NSW) and AVP-Queensland report that they have benefited from referrals by Life Line generated by the Australia Says No to Violence Campaign.

### **COMMUNICATION**

- It was agreed to invite volunteers to reactivate the AVP-Australia Communication Working Party to discuss conference calls, skype, wikis, discussion groups, websites and chat lines. Contact Malcolm at [avpsydney@avp.org.au](mailto:avpsydney@avp.org.au)

Present at one or more of the meetings – Allison (NSW), Angela (Sydney), Anthea (Sydney & Seattle), Brae (Sydney), Chris (Victoria), Dennis (Sydney), John (Sydney & Seattle), Julie

Ann (Sydney), Katherine (Sydney), Laurie (Sydney), Malcolm (NSW), Moira (Victoria), Renate (NSW), Sabine (Blue Mts).

Apologies – Annie (NSW), Barbara (NSW), Bev (Vic), David (NSW), Elaine (Aotearoa), Julei (HIP Sydney), Heather (Qld), Jim (WA), Ken (NSW), Marc (Canada), Michelle (Sydney), Peter (Aotearoa), Rere (Aotearoa), Sally (WA) Shane (WA), Wendy (NSW)

### **III AVP WIKIS**

Five wikispaces to enable Australian AVP facilitators to share information and AVP learning activities were introduced. Most facilitators joined the Wikispaces during the National Gathering and had tutorials on how to use them.

The new wikispaces

- avpauactivities – learning activities for AVP facilitators
- avpauclearing house – AVP information for AVP facilitators
- avpnswcouncil – AVP NSW Council information
- avpaustralia – public information about AVP in Australia
- transformingconflict – public access to Transforming Conflict learning activities (linked to [www.transformingconflict.info](http://www.transformingconflict.info))

To use the wikispaces

- Go to [www.wikispaces.com](http://www.wikispaces.com)
- Log on (please include your first name in your username)
- Select the wiki
- Search your topic
- Facilitators are invited to add their comments at the top of each page

To join wikispaces

- Sign in & join with your username & password
- Confirm your email account by replying to the email received from Wikispaces
- Email Katherine to request connection to the wikis you would like to join.

## IV SCHEDULE FOR THE 2007 AVP-AUSTRALIA NATIONAL GATHERING

### Day 1 Friday 26.1.07 AM Session

1. Welcome and Agenda Preview
2. Housekeeping
3. Gathering: My name & a warm place in my life has been ....
4. L & L: 1 to 10
5. Plenary session
  - Intro – *John*
  - Report about AVP at the Quaker Yearly Meeting – *Sabine*
6. Break
7. Cellophane Man - *Wendy*
8. L & L: Here I sit
9. Reflection
10. Lunch

### Day 1 Friday 26.1.07 PM Session

1. Physical Report (similar to Weather Report)
2. Agenda Review
3. Plenary Session (continued from morning)
  - AVP in Churches – *Allison*
  - Restorative Justice 1 – *Laurie*
4. Verbal Boxing – *Wendy*
  - Prepare a range of scenarios
  - Explain purpose of exercise
  - Debrief after 1<sup>st</sup> few scenarios
  - Use exercise for 'Power' relationship role play'
  - Scenarios: ask players to respond naturally rather than stereotype their roles – i.e. don't tell people how aggressive to be; let them find their natural level
5. L & L – Colours (similar to 1 to 10)
6. Break
7. Business Meeting – *John*
8. Reflection

### Day 2 Saturday 27.1.07 AM Session

1. Welcome and Agenda Preview
2. Gathering: My special name & a gem in my life is ....
3. Plenary Session
  - Business Meeting report – *Katherine*
  - Wikis – *Katherine*
4. L & L
5. Plenary session (continued)
  - Report from International Gathering – *John & Anthea*
  - AVP International Committee - *John*
6. Break
7. Prison role plays – *Sabine*
  - Welcome and Agenda Review
  - My name & a time I handled a challenging situation well is ...
  - Exploring ideas of Conflict Resolution
  - How do I 'act' instead of 'role-play'?
  - Prison Role-play
  - Volunteer Role-play
8. Close: A gift for everyone
9. Lunch

### Day 2 Saturday 27.1.07 PM Session

1. Weather Report
2. Agenda Preview
3. Collective Wisdom & Dialogue – *Wendy*
4. Debrief
5. Break
6. Inside/Outside alternative and its relationship to I-messages – *Allison*
7. L& L
8. Reflection as Participants
9. Feedback as Facilitators
10. Super
11. Party Time: Folk singing – *Laurie & John*

### Day 3 Sunday 28/1/07 AM Session

1. Welcome and Agenda Preview
2. Gathering: My name & a shining light in my future is .....
3. Plenary session
  - Resources – *Malcolm*
  - Bethlehem 2007/Restorative Justice 2 – *Laurie*
    - Empowerment for community
      - \* Respect for victim
      - \* Responsibility of offender
    - The trip
      - \* Where did I go?
      - \* What was the reason went?
      - \* What did I do?
    - What can I pass on to others?
      - \* Experience
      - \* Team Work
      - \* Resources
    - Resources
      - \* Real Justice – Ted Wachtel
      - \* R/J Theoretical Foundations – GM Weitekamp & Hans Kerner
  - \*Website [www.realjustice.org](http://www.realjustice.org)
4. L & L

5. Plenary session (continued)
  - Introduction to NVC – *John*
6. Prison workshop – Role Plays in Prison – *Sabina & Brae*
  - Welcome to .....
  - Today I want to .....
  - Difficulties, Downsides, Challenges– General Benefits, Joys
  - Upside: Facilitators – Outmates, Men – Inmates
  - Let us gather: My name is & I am here because ...
  - Affirmation Pairs: My future Journey to Freedom
  - Any Questions, Feedback, Debrief
7. L & L
8. When NVC meets AVP – *John & Anthea*
  - How our feelings lead us to our needs
  - Basic Feelings brainstorm
    - \* Feelings when our needs aren't met
    - \* Feelings when our needs are met
  - Universal Needs brainstorm
  - Speak Out (listed in AVP Advanced Manual)
  - NVC empathy
9. Closing
10. Lunch and clean up

## V IDEAS, INSIGHTS AND QUESTIONS

These ideas came from notes taken during the sessions and from an Ideas Poster during the Gathering

- Plenary Sessions are a collection of 15 minute introductory talks
- Happy Hour – let people come early and share
- Friends are welcome, families by appointment
- What is the date of the AVP (NSW) Role-play workshop for 2007?
- Problems for the HIP Group
- Have a name game daily if new people come in
- It takes a creative mind to spell a word in 5 different ways
- Need to collect new ideas all year and bring them to National Gathering next year or ring Katherine
- Mentally prepare for a session – try not to change agendas
- Uncomfortable using own name in any form of Role-play
- Discussion after role-plays is very helpful
- *Speak Out* activity used as part of NVC meets AVP
- *Inside/outside* activity used for *I-messages*
- Have a collection of mini workshop agendas for facilitators to be able to use. Have different agendas available for the differing levels of participant experience with AVP. Good to have new activities for mini workshops with a variety of participants with differing levels of participant experience with AVP

### HURRICANE - LEARNING ACTIVITY VARIATION

- Run around your chair, not run from one chair to another

### INSIDE/OUTSIDE – LEARNING ACTIVITY VARIATION

Can be useful preliminary activity for I-message

Part 1 – outside life experiences (or conflict), inside feelings

Part 2 – inside strategies, outside impact on others

### COLOUR 1-10 – LEARNING ACTIVITY VARIATION

- Like 1-10. Call out a colour rather than a number. The colours can be limited to a colour the caller is wearing
- Can also use as a variation for the learning activity Stand Up – stand up all of us who are wearing the colour ....

### ARMCHAIR ROLE-PLAY – LEARNING ACTIVITY VARIATION

Instruction each person leaving a character should be debriefed on the way out. Have names for the characters.

### BEING BEHIND BARS - SESSION NOTES - Sabine

- Ask participant to imagine that you are in prison and what it means to them
- Major interruptions that occurs
- How does it relate to their lives
- Difficulty in working in prisons in US

## **VI MR CELLAPHONE – SESSION NOTES - Wendy**

### **DIRECTIONS**

#### **1 Tell people that we are going to mill around doing mini role plays- 20 mins**

- 1) Ignore people vs. make eye contact and say hello and smile.
- 2) Sit on your own vs sit down next to someone and start talking.
- 3) Refuse help vs. accept help
- 4) Something trivial vs. talk about the most significant experience you had recently.

#### **2 Watch video- song from Chicago: Mr Cellophane (segment 12)- 5 mins**

#### **3 Triads**

How does it feel to be treated as if you are invisible?- 5 mins

#### **4 Change triads...**

What is he doing that makes him invisible? 5 mins

What do you do that makes you invisible to yourself and to others? 5 mins

Draw outline of Mr Cellophane on cardboard...Invite people to write on post-it notes things they do to stay invisible- 5 mins

**5 Mini role plays-** Get two of the three people to role play a) being invisible b) being visible. 10 mins

Debrief....10 mins

#### **6 If time...**

Read affirmation and create your own truth statement: 5 mins

On back of sheet- list before- after.....10 mins

Walk around circle and share truth statements.....Add to your own.. 5 mins.

**85 mins.**

### **SESSION FEEDBACK**

- Follow on later from Affirmation Pairs
- Mini workshop
- Excerpts from Chicago – excellent – maybe have to obtain the DVD resources
- Could use CD only
- Role-play, invisible role-play to act out – one very visible, invite on to a stage
- Role-play part – bit rushed



- Value of multi-media resources – good different range of media – different modes of learning
- Moving people out of victim-hood (my reality could be changed) – small change for a major role
- Print out words
- Precursor to Underlying Anger – your responsibility
- Alternative to role-plays – value of Party Time – moving and speaking and shifting new people – interactive learning experiential
- Pace a bit fast in Party Time – possible debrief after Party Time
- Could take any negative belief – story, example Ugly Duckling
- Staying in same group – depends where you are in workshop structure – development – flexibility important
- Could separate the different parts of the exercise
- Buddies a good idea for extra opportunity to debrief
- “How I make myself invisible” write on post-it pad pages & stick to poster picture of figure of a man

**Truth statement vs. affirmation**

A truth statement is something that you already know on the deepest level is true but have forgotten. It must be something that really resonates with you as being more true than the false beliefs that you are invisible and that you cannot change being invisible.

**Respect for Self**

Our greatest fear is not that we are inadequate, but that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, handsome, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to manifest the glory of God within us. It is not just in some; it is in everyone. And, as we let our own light shine, we consciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

--Nelson Mandela, 1994 South African Presidential Inaugural Speech, quoting spiritual leader Marianne Williamson of the Church of Today in Detroit.

**Sample Truth statement:**

It does not serve the world for me to be invisible. I choose to make a stand for myself and for those who come after me.

**Your truth statement:**

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**Ways I will remember who I really am  
and show respect for myself.**

<b>Old behaviour</b>	<b>New behaviour</b>	<b>How I will remind myself How I will check my progress</b>

**Additional truth statements....**

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"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it."

## **IX COLLECTIVE WISDOM & DIALOG - SESSION NOTES - Wendy**

### **DIRECTIONS**

- Experienced facilitators familiar with collective wisdom are asked "What capacities are needed to facilitate dialogue in groups and tap into collective wisdom?"
- Trainee facilitators are spread around the groups and mixed with experienced facilitators.
- Time allowed- 30 minutes
- Each small group recorded their ideas on posters
- At the end of the time posters are spread out from the centre of the circle and facilitators walk around them looking at other groups ideas.

### **GROUP 1 BRAINSTORM**

General:

"connectiveness"- which encompasses both attitudes and behaviours

Tolerance of uncertainty

Self awareness and other awareness

NOT groupthink

Specific:

1) The ability to listen without debating! Be able to entertain another point of view without compromising own view. Be able to move beyond the ego. Be no longer dominated by a need to be noticed.

2) Congruence- mind, body and actions all in alignment- in order to do this need somatic awareness.

3) Perception and Courage: Ability to perceive what needs to be said and the courage to be able to say it.

4) Tolerance of uncertainty. Able to hold open possibilities of future connection and optimism that the group can reach it.

### **GROUP 2 BRAINSTORM**

- \* patience
- \* comfortable with silence
- \* physical presence
- \* allowing time for a deeper response than our first emotional response
- \* creating a peaceful energy- being present where you are
- \* mindfulness
- \* listening
- \* believing what is right will eventually emerge
- \* sixth sense
- \* let the silence speak
- \* open to learning from everyone

Suggested techniques to develop:

- \* calming the mind

- \* connecting with the body- aikido

#### GROUP 3 BRAINSTORM

- \* holding the space
- \* knowledge and confidence
- \* understanding of collective wisdom
- \* experience of collective wisdom
- \* access to models of good facilitation
- \* opportunities to practice facilitation
- \* debrief (knowledge)
- \* trust intuition
- \* trust the process
- \* empathy
- \* listening
- \* energy

#### GROUP 4 BRAINSTORM

A good facilitator must understand, experience (as a participant?) experience the facilitation of and practice the following components:

- \* Harmony
- \* Shared knowledge
- \* Trust
- \* Connectedness/ good communication
- \* Synergy
- \* Openness
- \* Community
- \* Respect

#### GROUP 5 BRAINSTORM

##### **Focusing:**

Listening  
 Empathy  
 Emptiness-less is more  
 Pull back  
 Stand aside  
 Own stuff aside  
 Available  
 Vibe watching  
 Emotionally present  
 Monitoring own emotional presence  
 clearing obstacles to  
 bracketing  
 Light..depth

##### **Guiding Agenda**

friendship

##### **Surrender**

group conscious  
encouraging  
positive affirmation  
non judgmental  
clarity  
Team awareness skills  
work as team  
acknowledging caring

### **Respect**

awareness of transforming power  
personally growing and open to change  
flexible  
humility  
Prepared for the unexpected  
setting boundaries  
firm and gentle  
firm with good humour- establishing norms

### **Live In Paradox**

clear on priorities  
hold space  
vulnerability  
clarity  
clarifying  
Transient invisibility  
"Like the River Nile estuary"

### **GROUP 6 BRAINSTORM**

#### **Listening:**

- \* able to put own stuff aside
- \* empathy
- \* vibe watching
- \* group consciousness
- \* emotionally present
- \* non judgemental
- \* actively receptive

#### **Respect:**

- \* listening
- \* non judgmental
- \* emotionally present
- \* flexible

#### **Holding Space:**

- \* group consciousness
- \* own stuff aside
- \* work as a team
- \* listening
- \* respect
- \* Boundaries- firm, gentle, encouraging, acknowledging, affirming, good humour

**Awareness of Transforming Power (Collective Wisdom)**

- \* caring
- \* respect
- \* flexibility
- \* affirmation
- \* clarity

The above information was collected from small group feedback to the group (taped) and posters made from small group brainstorm.